



Letwell Parish Council

Equality and Diversity Policy

Background

The Equality Act 2010 replaces the existing anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. It simplifies the law removing inconsistencies and making it easier for people to understand and comply with it. It also strengthens the law in important ways to help tackle discrimination and inequality. The Act applies to all organisations that provide a service to the public or section of the public.

The Public Sector Equality Duty is a key measure in the Act which came into force on 5 April 2011. All public bodies and organisations carrying out public functions have a duty to consider the needs of all individuals in their day to day work – in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees. The Public Sector Equality Duty ensures that all public bodies play their part in making society fairer by tackling discrimination and providing equality of opportunity for all.

Legal Position

To discriminate against someone means to treat them less favourably, to harass or victimise them or to subject them to a provision, criterion or practice which puts them at a disadvantage.

It is unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the grounds of the following 'protected characteristics' (as defined in the Act):

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership

Councils' Commitment

Letwell Parish Council is committed to actively recognising and promoting equality and diversity. We believe in making every effort to be a fair and unbiased organisation.

As a public body the Council expects an exemplary commitment from all staff and council members, taking a proactive approach to equality and diversity.

As a service provider the Council work to foster a culture in which diversity is valued and staff and members are able to promote equality and challenge unlawful harassment, discrimination or bullying in any of its processes or services. We do this to ensure that staff and our service users receive fair and equal treatment throughout their contact with us. Any indication of behaviours which breach these standards will be investigated by the council.

We will work with residents, service users, staff, other organisations and members of the public to ensure that we are consistently fair, and that our services meet the needs of our diverse community.

In all our activities we will have due regard to the three aims of the Equality Duty:

- **Eliminate unlawful discrimination**, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- **Foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

Service Delivery

In exercising its functions and delivering services, the Parish Council will have due regard to the three aims of the Equality Duty and it will take a proportionate approach when complying with it. Equality issues will be an influence on our policies and decisions and we will consider the needs of all individuals in our day to day work.

Employment

Letwell Parish Council is dedicated to encouraging a supportive and inclusive culture amongst its workforce. It is within our best interest to promote diversity and eliminate discrimination in the workplace.

Our aim is to ensure that all employees and job applicants are given equal opportunity. Each employee will be respected and valued and able to give their best as a result.

This policy reinforces our commitment to providing equality and fairness to all in our employment and not provide less favourable facilities or treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity,

race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origin, religion or belief, or sex and sexual orientation. We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

All employees, no matter whether they are part-time, full-time, or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. When Letwell Parish Council selects candidates for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit, it will be on the basis of their aptitude and ability.

All employees will be given help and encouragement to develop their full potential and utilise their unique talents. Therefore, the skills and resources of our organisation will be fully utilised and we will maximise the efficiency of our workforce.

Commitments:

- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all team members are recognised and valued.
- To create a working environment that promotes dignity and respect for every employee.
- To not tolerate any form of intimidation, bullying, or harassment, and to discipline those that breach this policy.
- To make training, development, and progression opportunities available to all staff.
- To promote equality in the workplace, which Letwell Parish Council believes is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- To encourage anyone who feels they have been subject to discrimination to raise their concerns, so we can apply corrective measures.
- To encourage employees to treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- To regularly review all our employment practices and procedures so that fairness is maintained at all times.

Letwell Parish Council will inform all employees that an equality and diversity policy is in operation and that they are obligated to comply with its requirements and promote fairness in the workplace. The policy will also be drawn to the attention of funding members, agencies, stakeholders, customers and job applicants.

Monitoring

This Equality and diversity policy is fully supported by Members.

Our policy will be monitored and reviewed annually to ensure that equality and diversity is continually promoted in the workplace.

Policy first adopted by Letwell Parish Council on 11th April 2024

Agreed Minute reference: 24-062

Reviewed: March 2024
Next Review: May 2025